

COLORADO CANYONS NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA
Rabbit Valley Working Group Meeting Minutes
March 25, 2002

Attendees:

Ken Currey	Kathy Click	Wade Johnson	Lynae Rogers
Art Donoho	Mike Click	Chris Jouflas	Jane Ross
Bob Silbernagel	Jim Cooper	Neal McKinstry	Lovell Sasser
Gene Arnesen	Dave Dunsmoor	John Potter	Troy Schnurr
Sue Benjamin	Joe Dyk	Eric Rechel	Charlie Sweet
Nadja Brozina	Dave Farny	Steve Renstrom	Paul Toft
Arleta Carr	N. J. Fulmer		

Greetings and Introductions

There were 25 people present when Chairman Dave Farny called the meeting to order.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) distributed copies of the original Rabbit Valley Recreation Management Plan and Rabbit Valley maps. Participants compared trails shown on those maps with trails marked on newer maps.

Working Group Discussions

Troy Schnurr, Recreation Ranger for the National Conservation Area (NCA), presented photographs that showed trail deterioration in some areas. Users have expanded some of the single-track trails by going off-trail and bringing in 4-wheel vehicles. Troy also indicated that dry weather in recent years has discouraged vegetation from growing back.

Landowner Chris Jouflas asked Working Group members for their views on public trails crossing private lands. Chris noted that one prominent, but undesignated trail, crosses his property in the Wild Horse Mesa area. That led to a discussion on accelerating the process for a timely BLM purchase, or land exchange for private property in Rabbit Valley.

Jane Ross, Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area (CCNCA) Planning and Environmental Coordinator, said that, while the Working Group and the NCA Advisory Council could recommend a speedy resolution for land exchanges, all applicable federal

rules would still have to be followed. It was agreed that a BLM land exchange specialist should be present at the next Working Group meeting. The BLM will also attempt to get clarification from Congressman Scott McInnis's office regarding the legislative intent on purchasing, or exchanging for, private in-holdings.

Paul Toft noted that he had heard that BLM Utah is planning to close some trails in the area immediately west of Rabbit Valley (in the state of Utah). As a result, the Working Group requested that someone from the BLM Moab field office be present at the next, or a subsequent, Working Group meeting to discuss Utah's plans and how those plans might be coordinated with the NCA's plan.

N. J. Fulmer questioned whether any new trails should be allowed in the area and asked that a BLM soils expert also be present at the next meeting to talk about road and trail conditions. Ken Currey agreed that, while this request may be a good idea, it is not the Working Group's responsibility to start the planning process from scratch by requesting new analyses, or closing trails. Legislation for the NCA specifically states that motorized recreation is to continue in Rabbit Valley.

A Rabbit Valley field trip was scheduled for 3:30 p.m., Sunday, April 7, to discuss parking and camping issues, examine trails, and consider other issues. A BLM representative will be present to talk about land health issues.

After some discussion, Troy rearranged his schedule to join the Working Group's field trip.

The next Rabbit Valley Working Group meeting is set for 5:30 p.m., Monday, April 1. A subsequent meeting is scheduled for 5:30 p.m., Monday, April 8. The meeting was adjourned.